

State approves bill for more unpaid leave for military families

OLYMPIA - Gov. Chris Gregoire signed a bill last week that allows more unpaid leave for military families before or during deployment.

“I am pleased to sign this and to thank those who are sacrificing so much for our country. This bill will give military families an opportunity to connect before and after deployments,” Gregoire said. “By doing so, these families already facing uncertainty are better able to stay intact and healthy.”

The legislation provides that during periods of military conflict, employees are entitled to up to 15 days of unpaid leave before their spouse is deployed or while their spouse is on leave from deployment.

The bill also increases from 15 to 21 the number of days each year a state or local officer or employee who is a member of the Washington National Guard or Reserves is entitled to a military leave of absence from employment.

“As an Iraq War veteran, I know this bill will help Washington’s military families have precious time to connect during challenging times,” said Sen. Steve Hobbs, D-Lake Stevens. “I am happy we can help families who are already sacrificing so much.”

This measure will align Washington with California, Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Minnesota, Nebraska and New York, which have enacted similar legislation.

Gregoire also signed into law a bill that authorizes the state Department of Licensing to issue a special license plate to the parents of members of the U.S. armed forces who have died while in service to their country.

“These special plates will recognize and honor those men and women who have made the ultimate sacrifice,” Gregoire said. “I am honored to sign this bill and grateful to these families for their sacrifice.”

The idea for the bill came from the Washington state chapter of the Gold Star Mothers, an organization created in the 1920s whose membership is limited to mothers of armed forces members who died while in service to their country, or as a result of that service.

(Article courtesy of the Office of Governor Chris Gregoire.)

Welcome
Headquarters AMC
ASEV Team!



Photo by Abner Guzman

Technology on parade

Local high school students watch as a remote controlled Andros F6 robot from the 62nd Civil Engineer Squadron’s Explosive Ordinance Disposal flight works its way up a hill during a demonstration on the flightline. The students were visiting McChord March 24 as part of a robotic competition sponsored by For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology, or FIRST.

AFAF campaign kicks off

By
Tyler Hemstreet
Staff writer

The Air Force Assistance Fund drive, which benefits active duty, reserve, guard, retirees, surviving spouses and families, kicked off here Monday and runs through May 2.

Unit and squadron AFAF representatives have been making the rounds talking about the campaign and distributing literature and payroll deduction slips all this week, said Master Sgt. Tony Brown, the installation project officer with the 62nd Maintenance Operation Squadron.

The Secretary of the Air Force set the goal Air Force-wide of generating \$5.7 million for the 2008 AFAF drive, Sergeant Brown said.

“We as an installation want to do our part to help the Air Force get there,” he said.

In addition to reaching out to the entire base population, Sergeant Brown said the AFAF committee here plans on hosting some on-base fundraisers in the next couple of weeks.

People can contribute to the drive through cash, check, money orders or payroll deductions to donate to any of the four funds — the Air

Force Aid Society, Indigent Widow’s Funds for officers’ and enlisted, and the General and Mrs. Curtis E. LeMay Foundation.

The Air Force Aid Society provides Airmen and their families with worldwide emergency financial assistance, education assistance and an array of base-level community-enhancement programs.


The Air Force Enlisted Village Indigent Widows’ Fund provides rent subsidy and other support to indigent widows and widowers of retired enlisted members ages 55 years and older. The village is located in Shalimar, Fla., near Eglin Air Force Base.


The Air Force Villages Indigent Widow’s Fund supports the Air Force Village in San Antonio, which is a life-care community for retired officers, spouses, widows or widowers, and family members.


The General and Mrs. Curtis E. LeMay Foundation provides rent and financial assistance to indigent widows and widowers of officers and enlisted members in their own homes and communities.

Contributions to the AFAF are tax deductible. For more information, visit www.afaassistancefund.org.

Weekend Weather

FRIDAY

Hi: 43
Low: 29

SATURDAY

Hi: 45
Low: 34

SUNDAY

Hi: 49
Low: 32

Forecast generated at 7 a.m. Thursday
Courtesy of the 62nd Operations Support Squadron

Mission Accomplished

Total McChord sorties3,617
Total flying hours11,453.2
Cargo moved (tons)27,579.2
Departure reliability rate95.4%
Mission capable rate81.3%
Personnel currently deployed353
Reservists currently activated.....150
(Jan. 1 to Tuesday. Numbers updated Tuesday.)

Don’t miss it ...
Clam chowder cook-off

The Olympic Dining Facility hosts the 3rd annual Northwest Military Clam Chowder Cook-off today from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. A free chowder lunch will be served after the judging is over at 11 a.m.



Airman's Roll Call: Voluntary Protection program

Editor's note: Airman's Roll Call is an Air Force leadership tool designed for supervisors at all levels to help keep Airmen informed on current issues, clear up confusion, dispel rumors and provide additional face-to-face communication.

The Voluntary Protection Program is an enhanced safety program that focuses on developing and caring for the safety of Airmen, civilians and their families. It's a program all of us should know about and understand. Building a culture of safety is not just a quality-of-life issue. An Airman or worker sidelined by preventable injuries and illnesses costs

the Air Force money. In 2007, the civilian injury rate was 2.78 per 100 people. That means there were 4,417 injuries and illnesses and 2,327 of those that resulted in lost time. There were more than 2,200 active-duty injuries, which amounted to about 30,000 lost duty days.

Simply put, VPP is getting every one of us to actively identify and then take action to rid safety and health hazards, both on and off the job. By implementing VPP, we lower the overall mishap rate as well as increase the health and wellness of both our military and civilian work force. We are teaching each wingman to identify hazards in the workplace and empower them to be part

of the solution. Air Force leaders need you to be safe. America needs our full team in the fight.

Here are some questions for you to consider as you evaluate your home and office for potential safety and health risks:

What potential hazards can you identify in your routine jobs, tasks and processes?

What significant changes can you make to remove those hazards?

How often do you perform a self-inspection in your home and work place?

Do you and your fellow Airmen know how to report hazards to your chain of command?

Where are your first aid and

emergency response kits located? Is everyone in your office or home aware of these locations as well?

Do you know how to fill out an incident report, and where to report it?

What type of safety training will be helpful for your work center and family at home?

Does your office have all the documentation needed for the training?

For more information, you can visit the U.S. Department of Labor Occupations Safety and Health Administration's VPP page at <http://www.osha.gov/dcsp/vpp/index.html> or the Air Force Safety Center Web site at <http://www.afsc.af.mil/>.

Energy conservation: Everyone can make a difference

By

Lt. Col. Mark McCloud

62nd Civil Engineer Squadron commander

For those of you who have been serving the Air Force for any length of time, you're probably used to change. You've heard — and probably used — the phrase “flexibility is the key to air power” when faced with change. For those who are new to the Air Force, get used to it. It's who we are — it sets us apart from other organizations. It is, and always has been a part of our culture and is something to be proud of. We don't change for change's sake; we do it for continuous improvement — to make the Air Force a more efficient, productive and lethal force. Today the process of creating positive change is sometimes referred to as “transformation”, or “smart ops”. No matter what we call it, it is essential to our priorities of winning the war on terrorism, preparing for future conflicts and humanitarian missions, taking care of our Airmen and recapitalizing and modernizing our air, space and cyberspace systems.

One area of smart ops the Air Force is aggressively pursuing is energy conservation. The Air Force spends more than \$7 billion dollars a year

on energy, such as fuel for our aircraft and ground vehicles and utilities to keep our facilities running. By improving our energy efficiency just a few percentage points each year, we can save thousands of dollars that can be re-directed to fight the Global War on Terror or the modernization of our aging fleet. Here are some examples of how the Air Force is leading the charge in energy conservation.

For the third year in a row, the Air Force heads the Environmental Protection Agency's list of Top 10 federal government green power purchasers. We also ranked number three on the EPA's Top 25 list, a group that includes government, private industry, trade associations, as well as colleges and universities. Green power purchases accelerate the development of new renewable energy capacity nationwide.

The Air Force owns the largest solar power plant in the U.S. It's a 15-megawatt solar plant, made up of 70,000 solar panels and is located at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev. This new power plant will save Nellis approximately \$1 million per year on its energy bill. This is truly the model for the rest of our nation.

The Air Force is also a key contributor to alternative fuels research. Most of us have heard about the recent developments of alternative air-

craft fuels, including the McChord C-17 Globemaster III that completed the first transcontinental flight using a blend of regular aviation and synthetic fuel. But did you know that the Air Force is also funding some cutting-edge biofuel research? We are investigating ways to produce large quantities of hydrogen gas using photosynthetic microbes, commonly known as algae and cyanobacteria. In large quantities, the hydrogen gas could function as a renewable, cheap and clean energy source for ground vehicles and power plants.

So now that I've shared a few examples of how the Air Force is leading positive change in energy conservation, I'm sure you're thinking “So what can I do?” Well, everyone on Team McChord can contribute to our energy conservation efforts, both at work and at home. You could make sure you turn off the lights in your building when you are the last one to leave at night. Or you could be the one that places the cardboard in the recycling bin instead of the dumpster. Every little bit helps — and if we all start making energy conservation a part of our day-to-day activities, it will benefit our entire Air Force and free up precious dollars for other critical programs. Thank you for your willingness to make positive changes that will undoubtedly make the Air Force better.

Professionals of the week

62nd Mission Support Group

Ms. Betty Skeen

Duty title:
62nd MSG secretary

Duty section:
62nd MSG command section

Hometown:
Granby, Mo.



Why she's super:

Ms. Skeen is the face of the MSG commander's front office. She goes above and beyond each day, making sure everyone who enters the office receives a warm greeting. Her attention to detail while reviewing paperwork is impeccable. Not a single comma, dash or period leaves the office out of place. On top of her regular responsibilities, she champions and manages our office going away and water funds. Besides doing her job exceptionally well, Ms. Skeen cares for the entire office's moral and well being.

Tech. Sgt. Jeanine McGrory

Duty title:
Non commissioned officer in charge of executive support

Duty section:
MSG/CCEA

Hometown:
St. Louis, Mo.



Why she's tops:

Sergeant McGrory is the backbone of administrative support for the eight squadrons that make up the 62nd MSG. She is recognized as one of the very best 3As on McChord and her impact is felt throughout the wing. She has played a major role in the preparation and standup of the 62nd MSG, 62nd Operations Group and 62nd Maintenance Groups' information management sections. She also was selected by the functional manager to lead the automation of training records and supported Rodeo 2007 while doing it. In 2007, Sergeant McGrory was recognized as the McChord Communication and Information NCO of the Year.

EDITORIAL STAFF

62nd AW commander: Col. Jeffrey Stephenson
Chief, Public Affairs: Master Sgt. Alvin Louthier
NCOIC, Public Affairs: Staff Sgt. Oshawn Jefferson
Chief of Internal: Staff Sgt. Eric Burks
Editor: Tyler Hemstreet
62nd Services Squadron contributor: Patti Jeffrey
Photographer: Abner Guzman
Graphic artist: Lisa Lemmer

62ND AIRLIFT WING, MCCORD AFB, WASHINGTON

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CONTACT NUMBERS

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Mailing Address: 62nd AW/PAI
100 Col. Joe Jackson Blvd., Suite 1077
McChord AFB, WA 98438
Phone: (253) 982-5637 **Fax:** (253) 982-5025
E-mail: northwestairlifter@mcchord.af.mil

AMC commander reinforces need for new tanker

By

Staff Sgt. Monique Randolph

Secretary of the Air Force

Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (AFPN) — While many are focused on the formal protest of the recent KC-45A contract award, the needs of the warfighter — and the nation — remain unchanged. The Air Force’s nearly 50-year-old KC-135 Stratotanker must be replaced with a newer, more capable aircraft as soon as possible.

“This is a matter of national security and we can’t lose sight of that as a nation. It’s critically urgent that we get on with bringing a new tanker into our fleet; our global range and global reach rely on the tanker,” said Gen. Arthur J. Lichte, the commander of Air Mobility Command. “Tankers give us the ability to go anywhere on the face of the planet and strike our enemies, or deliver cargo or humanitarian aid.”

The tanker procurement, if it goes as planned, is still a 30-year process, which means Airmen could still be flying the KC-135 into the year 2040, the general said. Considering most airlines retired the commercial version of the KC-135 — the Boeing 707 — years ago, “It’s unconscionable for us to ask our Airmen to fly in, and attempt to maintain, aircraft that are 80 years old,” he said.

The aging aircraft puts a significant strain on maintenance and aircrews who keep them in the air, said General Lichte.

“The only reason the KC-135s are doing so well now is because of the total force Airmen at our bases keeping them flying,” he said. “For every sortie we fly, aircrews and maintenance remain flexible and consider a myriad of options if the primary aircraft can’t fly. Those Airmen make sure when that thirsty fighter is in the sky over Iraq or Afghanistan, or



Photo by Staff Sgt. Paul Clifford

A KC-135 Stratotanker sits on the flightline at Manas Air Base, Kyrgyzstan, awaiting ground crews to de-ice the tanker before it takes off on a refueling mission. The new KC-45A will replace the aging fleet of KC-135s.

that C-17 Globemaster III or C-130 Hercules needs to provide food or relief to a country in need, they are able to accomplish their missions. They make sure those airlifters, rushing home with a wounded Soldier, Sailor, Airman or Marine, can get them to the loving arms of their families and a U.S. hospital for the critical care they need.

“The reason those tankers are airborne is because when they are deployed, our Airmen work six days a week, 12 to 14 hours a day to make sure they can launch them every day,” he said.

Another issue facing tanker maintenance crews is the availability of parts for such an old aircraft.

“Just like an old car, you start it up and hope it’ll make it. When it breaks down, you hope you can find the spare parts you need to fix it,” General Lichte said. “That’s the

problem our maintainers face. Sometimes we have to go and manufacture new parts because there are no more left on the shelves.

“We’ve come a long way since the 1950s and ‘60s when these aircraft were sleek and new. Improved technologies and capabilities are available and we need to fold them into our tanker fleet,” the general added.

Some key attributes of the new tanker will include the ability to refuel with both boom and drogue systems, and the ability to receive fuel as well as deliver it. Currently, for most KC-135s to conduct drogue refueling operations, a boom drogue adapter must be attached to the boom before takeoff. This prevents the tanker from refueling receptacle-equipped aircraft in the same sortie.

The new tanker is also expected to carry cargo and passengers, and

have open communication architecture so it can receive data from the ground quickly.

“We’ve also asked for the new tanker to have defensive systems so we can fly closer into harm’s way, and we’ve asked for systems that can defend against today’s threats as well as emerging threats of the future,” General Lichte said. “The bottom line is, the warfighter needs a new tanker,” he said. “Any delays or hesitation are simply pushing the age of the tanker farther and farther out and increasing the risk to our national security.

“My hope is that as we go through this process of fielding a new tanker, following the letter of the law, we get through it quickly. And, when we come out on the other side, we get a new, very capable tanker to our Airmen as soon as possible,” General Lichte said.





Photo by Abner Guzman

Recognizing excellence

Sandra Cooper, assistant chief of fire prevention with the 62nd Civil Engineer Squadron, speaks to the crowd at the Women's History Month Breakfast Wednesday at the McChord Clubs and Community Center. More than 100 people attended the event, which recognized women at McChord for making a positive impact in the base community.

Editor's note: In last week's edition, Ms. Beth Cannon was identified as a volunteer manager and bookkeeper for the McChord Thrift Shop. She is a former manager and bookkeeper for the thrift shop. We regret the error.

AFPC general offers insight during Women's History Month

By
Staff Sgt. Jeremy Larlee
Air Force News Agency

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas (AFPN) — When Maj. Gen. K.C. McClain joined the Air Force in 1977, she planned to serve four years and move on.

Thirty years later, she is quick to identify what has kept her serving.

"What kept me in the Air Force is the people," General McClain said. "Their professionalism and dedication has challenged me and made me want to be better."

Now, in her duties as the Air Force Personnel Center commander, the general is in the perfect position to serve people across the Air Force. She is AFPC's 23rd commander and a 30-year-career Airman. AFPC members are responsible for developing personnel programs, implementing personnel policies and conducting personnel operations for more than one million Air Force military, civilian and retirees worldwide. The unit has 2,200 members.

Having women in command positions sends an important message out to the world, the general said.

"I think it sends a strong signal about (the) military, that it is only looking for the best leaders not whether they are male or female,"

she said.

She was molded by a strong mother and two older sisters who set a good example for her as she grew up in the small town of Sayre, Okla., she said.

It is important for young girls to have role models to look up to, the general said. In high school she was pushed by an English teacher who helped her prepare for college.

"I think I have benefited from women who preceded me and were trailblazers," General McClain said. "Hopefully I will help other women behind me see that they too can achieve this position."

Being a woman did not make it more difficult for her to earn her second star, she said. However, with only 104 major generals out of 65,000 officers in the Air Force it is a hard task for anybody to accomplish, she said.

"I have been able to do great things for a person from a small town in western Oklahoma," the general said.

The highlight of the general's career has been commanding the Department of Defense's Sexual Assault Task Force, she said. She believes that the task force effected important changes across the DOD. It is not a highlight that stands alone in her career.

"I find that it has been a totally amazing journey," General McClain said.



McChord Airmen

AROUND THE WORLD



MANAS AIR BASE, Kyrgyzstan — Tech. Sgt. Chad Steele, non commissioned officer in charge of C-17 Globemaster III supply for the 817th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron, Detachment 1, poses in front of a C-17 loaded with helicopters and equipment during a recent deployment. Sergeant Steele is assigned to the 62nd Logistics Readiness squadron here.



SOUTHWEST ASIA — 1st Lt. Tracy Maestas, 62nd Aerial Port Squadron, prepares to off-load a Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle for delivery to ground units during a recent deployment.



Air Force leaders, lawmakers discuss BRAC construction

By
Staff Sgt. J.G. Buzanowski
Secretary of the Air Force
Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (AFPN) — Air Force leaders met with members of House and Senate subcommittees in March here to discuss military construction, base realignment and closure and joint service basing issues.

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. T. Michael Moseley and Maj. Gen. Del Eulberg, the Air Force civil engineer, met with members of the House Appropriation Committee Subcommittee on Military Construction and Military Affairs.

Also involved in discussions were Bill Anderson, the assistant secretary of the Air Force for installations, environment and logistics, and sister service representatives who spoke with the Senate Armed Services Committee Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support.

Members of Congress had nothing but high praise for Air Force civil engineer units helping with reconstruction efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan, and specifically cited RED HORSE and Prime BEEF engineers.

“Those folks are heroes for what they’ve done in building roads and schools for the local populace and installations for our folks to use,” General Moseley said. “There was one unit that had been there six months and asked to stay another six months so they could finish some of their construction projects. And we’re talking about doing work in 104-degree heat.”

In addition, Iraqi and Afghan citizens make up more than 70 percent of engineers and 90 percent of the construction workforce on 576 projects totaling \$4.6 billion, the general said.

“It’s creating opportunities for them to help rebuild their country

and have more of a hand in its future,” General Moseley said.

As for the Air Force’s future, all three witnesses highlighted the service’s success in energy use and environmental stewardship.

“We have been recognized as the number one federal purchaser of renewable energy four years running, and we are overall number three in the nation,” General Moseley said.

Further, Air Force officials have had great success in alternative fuels research — having flown a C-17 Globemaster III and B-52 Stratofortress on a synthetic fuel blend. As the most demanding service when it comes to fuel consumption, it’s the Air Force’s responsibility to find more effective and efficient ways of doing business, Mr. Anderson said.

Mr. Anderson also said that if market development can make the production of synthetic fuels more viable in the commercial market, it would make it even easier for the Air Force in the future.

Senators and congressmen also had questions about the future of joint basing — where multiple services share the same installation with one branch defined as the lead. Most of their mutual concerns pertained to the details on who would be responsible for what.

“We’ve held a lot of table top exercises on that very thing,” General Moseley said. “Our issue is that our installations are warfighting platforms, not just some place we deploy from, which is different than the other services. We launch missions from our bases, to places around the world and then back. So while we fully support the idea of joint basing, we want to ensure we can still conduct our missions.”

Joint basing is part of the 2005 BRAC findings, and the Air Force is committed to meeting all requirements by the due date of 2011. To make that happen, more than \$2.1



Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. T. Michael Moseley talks with members of the House Appropriation Committee Subcommittee on Military Construction and Military Affairs March 13 in Washington, D.C. General Moseley answered the congressmen’s questions on housing projects, base realignment and closure issues, as well as joint basing issues.

billion of the Air Force fiscal 2009 budget is for military construction. This will ensure bases have the facilities in place for consolidation and mission efficiency, General Eulberg said.

General Moseley and Mr. Anderson also championed the successes of housing privatization, with most of this year devoted to renovating dormitory and housing areas in overseas locations.

“Our dorms right now are inadequate for our youngest Airmen, so we’re going to get that situation taken care of,” General Moseley said. “We want to absolutely make sure we have quality housing for all our Airmen around the world. Housing privatization has leveraged more than 350 million taxpayer dollars into \$6 billion in private sector investment, speeding the delivery of adequate housing to our Airmen.”

Both sets of witnesses answered questions about a contractor who defaulted on construction projects affecting four Air Force bases as well as Army and Navy installations. General Moseley and Mr. Anderson both assured lawmakers that the issue was being handled and that the projects would not only be completed, but oversight has been created so it doesn’t happen again.

Above all, General Moseley reiterated that America’s Airmen have been engaged in on-going operations for 17 years and thanked Congress for its support.

“As the Air Force continues to modernize and recapitalize,” General Moseley said, “we will continue to wisely invest our precious military construction, BRAC and environmental funding to win today’s fight, take care of our people and prepare for tomorrow’s challenges.”



Parent University set to educate military parents

By
Tyler Hemstreet
Staff Writer

Being a good parent and spouse is hard enough in today’s world without the added stress of deployments and the high operations tempo military members deal with on a daily basis.

In an effort to better equip military parents to deal with the stressors they face each day, McChord is hosting Parent University, a free one-day seminar on April 5 starting at 8 a.m. at the McChord Clubs and Community Center.

The keynote speaker for the event is Dr. John Gottman, the author or co-author of 178 published academic articles and 37 books about relationships and parenting. Dr. Gottman has also appeared on numerous TV programs, including “Good Morning America,” “Today,” “CBS Morning News” and “Oprah.” He’s also the co-founder of the Gottman Institute with his wife, Dr. Julie Schwartz Gottman.

“We’d heard about him for many years ... we’re really excited to have him speak,” said Eva Taylor, chairperson for the event with the 62nd Medical Operations Squadron. “He interacts really well with the audience — he brings them in.”

The seminar will also feature several different hour-long workshops touching on a wide variety of topics dealing with parenting and relationships. Organizers for the event reached out to health care and social service professionals from the Air Force, Army and Navy set to teach the workshops to help establish the topics that would be most beneficial to military families, said Ronica Sobiech, 62nd MDOS.

“We wanted to get feedback from them about what issues they were seeing come up so we could better address it,” Ms. Sobiech said.



Senior Airman Timothy Valdez, 4th Airlift Squadron, adjusts the volume on a headset worn by Matthew Shelton during a tour of a C-17 Globemaster III last year. More than 200 children from McChord's child development center and Escape Zone toured the aircraft last year as part of Month of the Military Child activities. Parent University — April 5 at the McChord Clubs and Community Center — is kicking off Month of the Military Child activities this year.

Some of the workshops will touch on managing deployment-related stress, developing infant sign language, strengthening relationships between partners and better preparing parents for parent/teacher conferences, Ms. Taylor said.

“We want to give parents the tools to deal with these issues,” she said. “We want to empower them.”

There will also be a variety of military and civilian vendors on hand from various local sup-

port organizations offering resources and information to parents.

“If you can enhance a parent’s skills, then it just spreads out and benefits the entire family,” Ms. Taylor said.

While reservations for the event are recommended, parents can still show up on the day of the event. For more information or to make reservations, call 982-9043. Organizers are asking parents to not bring children to the event.



62nd Medical Group Clinic realignment

Medical BRAC changes won't affect service

BY
Tyler Hemstreet
Staff Writer

While there will be some reorganization activity happening at the 62nd Medical Group clinic in the coming weeks, 62nd MDG officials are reminding patients that the current services the clinic offers will not change.

Pediatrics will be moved from the left side of the clinic to the right by late next week, and by the end of April many dependent patients will be transferred from flight medicine to family medicine, said Maj. Bill Fecke, resource management flight commander for the 62nd Medical Support Squadron.

"The number one most visible thing to people is going to be the fact that about half of the population will end up changing primary care managers," Major Fecke said.

As part of the changes, active duty Airmen will be seen by providers in the new Airman's Clinic section, he said.

The physical organizational moves are to help the clinic run more smoothly as it transitions with Madigan Army Medical Center as part of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Act, said Lt. Col. Bruce Roehm, 62nd MDG administrator and 62nd MDSS commander.

The BRAC directive is a distinctly separate initiative from joint basing.

Patients will receive a letter in the mail confirming the switch to their new provider.

"There isn't going to be any change in location for them, just a possible change in PCM," Colonel Roehm said. "We're not losing any services. We will continue to be their gateway to specialty care."

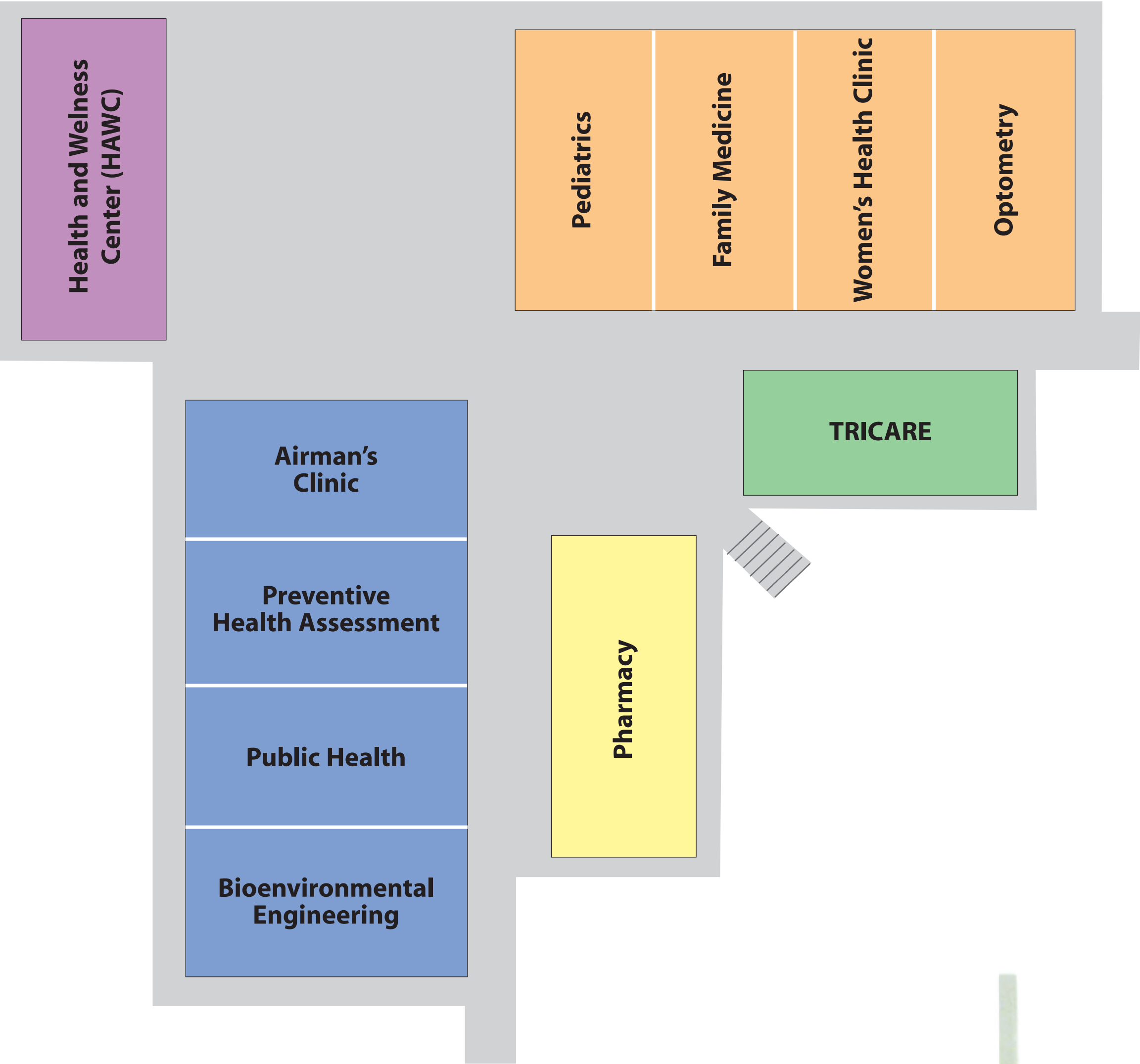
Over the next six to eight months, the clinic will undergo other changes as Department of the Army civilians will continue to join the McChord Clinic work force treating patients and the base's Health and Wellness Center will move from the fitness center annex to the clinic.

"The ultimate aim is a transparent realignment," said Lt. Col. John Andrus, 62nd MDG chief of aerospace medicine and 62nd Medical Operations Squadron commander. Although the McChord clinic will realign with MAMC and BRAC Law dictated a cost savings of 48 personnel, medical and dental services will continue at their current clinic location.

The 12,500 enrolled beneficiaries can expect the same type of services at the McChord Clinic after the realignment as they do now.

"We have communicated with wing leadership and MDG personnel frequently over the last year and a half with key medical BRAC updates and engaged flight leadership every step of the way in developing the personnel/mission transition plan," Colonel Roehm said.

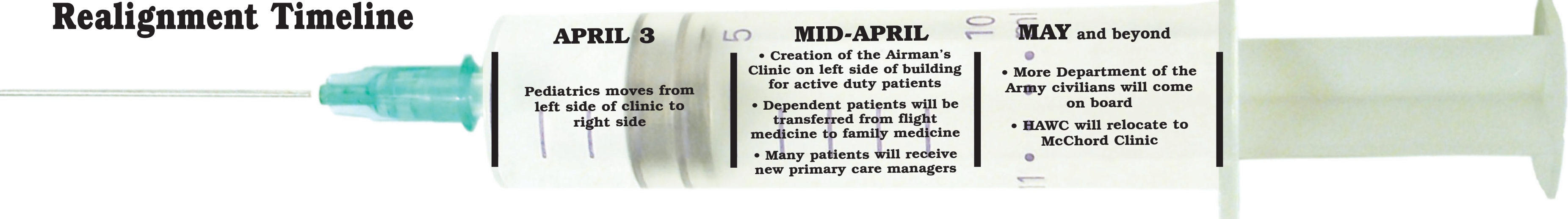
"Synchronizing the mission and transition plans are key to ensuring continued high-quality, patient-focused health care at McChord."



Frequently asked questions

- Q:** Will my family members have to go to Madigan for care?
A: No. The McChord Clinic will maintain the same services, patient population and building as today.
- Q:** What about my prescription, do I have to transfer anything?
A: No. You do not need to take any actions on prescriptions. They will not expire early even if your primary care manager changes. You will still be able to call in your refills and pick them up at the window at McChord Clinic.
- Q:** If I'm an active duty female, can I be seen by a women's health practitioner for my annual health exam?
A: Yes. You will still be able to call the TRAC and schedule on an as-available basis for your annual exam, just as today.
- Q:** Do I need to go to the TRICARE service center at Madigan Army Medical Center and re-enroll?
A: No. You do not need to take any action to maintain TRICARE Prime enrollment at the McChord Clinic. In the coming weeks as we move patients between providers, you will get a TRIWest letter informing you of your new McChord Clinic primary care manager.
- Q:** What happens to my medical records and information here?
A: Your patient records will stay at the McChord Clinic, where your PCM is located.
- Q:** I have a specialty care referral to Madigan and I'm getting care there already. What will happen to me when the 62nd MDG deactivates? Can I continue my treatment?
A: Yes. There is no change to your specialty care referral.
- Q:** How will I get an appointment when the 62nd MDG deactivates?
A: In the same manner one does now, by calling the TRAC at 1-800-404-4506.

Realignment Timeline



62nd OSS tries to complete ‘worst-to-first’ journey

By
 Tyler Hemstreet
 Staff Writer

With each 62nd Operations Support Squadron win this year, the memory of last year’s intramural basketball season got one step closer to being erased.

A win in tonight’s intramural basketball championship game may wipe the memory away entirely.

After finishing a dismal 3-9 and missing the playoffs in 2007, the arrival of some new players and a bit of organization this year fueled OSS to a 13-2 record and the No. 2 seed in the playoffs. A 48-46 semifinal victory over MXS Wednesday at the fitness center put OSS into tonight’s championship game (against either AMXS, MXS or APS, as results were not available at press time) at 6 p.m. at the fitness center.

“We have some new guys, we’ve run some practices and there is some real direction and teamwork this year,” OSS head coach Jonathan Lankford said. “It’s nice to kind of start over from last year.”

Despite the new influx of talent, the team has really gelled and come together — especially on offense.

“We use a lot of fast ball move-

ment, so we get plenty of open shots,” Lankford said.

The lone carryover from last year’s team, Darren Firth, is happy to be back in the playoffs and have a shot at the title.

“It’s nice to win,” he said. “We just have to keep playing defense and running our game on offense. We all play really well together.”

Guard Trivone Curry, who played college basketball at Division III Lake Erie College in Ohio and Division I Cleveland State, is one of the newcomers and likes what he sees.

“This year we really have some chemistry,” he said. “We all hang out on and off the court.”

That kind of chemistry is a must-have within the type of fast-paced offense — similar to what the NBA’s Phoenix Suns run — OSS has leaned on to get to the title game.

“We like to push the ball and get the other team tired from running,” Curry said. “Everyone has learned it pretty quick.”

The yet-to-be-determined opponent will likely get a big dose of OSS’ high-tempo offense come tip-off tonight.

“We just have to keep playing at that tempo and stay calm if we get behind,” Curry said. “If we do that, we should be alright.”

WWII veterans fly on ‘Spirit of Go For Broke’

By

Tech. Sgt. Tom Czerwinski
Pacific Air Forces Public Affairs

HICKAM AIR FORCE BASE, Hawaii (AFPN) — After waiting for more than a year and a half from the christening of the seventh C-17 Globemaster III added to Hickam Air Force Base’s fleet of eight, the men for whom it was named finally got their ride here recently.

A group of 40 surviving veterans from the famed 442nd Regimental Combat Team and the 100th Infantry Battalion shuffled onboard to the “Spirit of Go For Broke” and took to the sky for a 45-minute tour around some of the Hawaiian Islands.

Not only was the flight a historic occasion for the World War II vets, but it was a special flight for a father and son.

Chief Master Sgt. Irvin Yoshino, the superintendent with the Hawaii Air National Guard’s 154th Wing F-22 Raptor Program Integration Office was able to go on the flight with his father, 87-year-old George Yoshino who was a rifleman with company K, 442nd RCT, from 1944 to 1946.

“Being here with my father and accompanying him on the flight was a special time for both of us. It has taken me an entire career to get my father out here to see what I do,” said Sergeant Yoshino. “This is a great way to honor these veterans and what they did for our country.”

“We were in the European Theater of Operation and served in Italy. In August 1944 at age 23, I was a replacement soldier and much older than the earlier group who were mostly 18-years-old, and just out of high school,” Mr. Yoshino said. “To be remembered by the military is a great honor.”

The flight was a mission of the Hawaii Air National Guard’s 204th Airlift Squadron, boasting a crew of



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Tom Czerwinski

Veterans from the 442nd Regimental Combat Team and the 100th Infantry Battalion exit the back of the “Spirit of Go For Broke” after getting a 45-minute flight around some of the Hawaiian Islands. The “Spirit of Go For Broke,” one of Hickam Air Force Base’s C-17 Globemaster III aircraft, was named in honor of the men and their motto. The soldiers of “Go For Broke” were volunteers of second generation Japanese Americans and the unit was one of the most highly decorated World War II combat units.

all Guardsmen who fly the C-17 as an associate unit with the active duty 535th Airlift Squadron at Hickam AFB.

During the flight the veterans toured the cockpit for spectacular views of the Hawaiian Islands, interacted with the crew and learned about modern air mobility and global reach.

“Today was a great privilege for them to invite us to fly on this magnificent modern airplane. I could not believe in my lifetime, I would get this opportunity,” Mr. Yoshino said.

After the flight the veterans were treated to a catered meal at the 154th Wing dining facility. “This is a lot better than the Army chow of K-

rations we used to get,” said Mr. Robert Arakaki, the 100th Infantry Battalion association president. “A K-ration was usually packages of dried biscuits with canned meat and eggs, but they were better than nothing.”

Chief Master Sgt. Alan Ogata, the 204th Airlift Squadron superintendent thanked the vets for their service to country, for coming out and spending their day with the unit and taking the flight.

“You all are our heroes, we are proud to be in your presence here today,” said Sergeant Ogata.

The 442nd RCT was composed mostly of “Nisei,” or second generation of Japanese-American soldiers, who wanted to prove their loyalty to

the U.S. — many of their families were interned in camps while they fought during the war. To the members of the 442nd RCT, “Go For Broke” meant to be all-in with nothing to lose.

The courage of these veterans led them to be the most decorated in our country’s history and included the award of 9,846 Purple Hearts and 21 Medals of Honor.

“It’s a great privilege to come into contact younger members of the armed forces here today and represent our unit the 442nd Regimental Combat Team,” Mr. Yoshino said. “If I had to do it all over again, I would have a hard time keeping up with them, flying these great airplanes.”



Little, but strong: Burned Iraqi child overcomes odds

By

1st Lt. Lisa Spilinek

332nd Air Expeditionary Wing

Public Affairs

Editor’s Note: The names of the Iraqi mother and son in this article have been changed, at the mother’s request, to protect their identities from terrorists who would harm them if it was known that the pair received help from American servicemembers and the U.S. government.

BALAD AIR BASE, Iraq (AFPN) — A photo of an adorable little boy with a bowl haircut and big brown eyes was posted alongside a sign that read, “I may be little, but I am strong,” but the scarred child within the hospital isolation room didn’t look like the boy in the photo. Only the lively eyes were the same.

The 3 year old was the victim of a stove fire that left him with second and third degree burns covering 45 percent of his body along with inhalation burns to his lungs. Under the best health care conditions, the mortality rate for such severe injuries is 70 to 80 percent. In Iraq, it’s a death sentence.

Little, but strong Al Amreeki survived.

The credit for saving Al Amreeki’s life belongs to the medical staff working at the Air Force Theater Hospital located at Balad Air Base, Iraq, where the boy has been under

constant medical care since Jan. 25.

Now Al Amreeki will begin a new chapter in his recovery in America. Again, he has beaten the odds.

The boy and his mother soon will board an Air Force C-17 Globemaster III and will travel first to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Germany, and then on to the U.S.

Getting the boy permission to leave Iraq via a medical airlift mission to the U.S. required OKs at multiple levels by civilian and military leaders in Iraq and the U.S., to include an OK from the office of the U.S. secretary of defense. The Shriners Hospitals for Children-Cincinnati will provide his ongoing treatment. Children Without Borders, a nonprofit organization, will serve as the host agency for Al Amreeki and his mother.

“I don’t know how to thank the American people. They are a great and kind people because they saved my son’s life,” said Al Amreeki’s mother, Amil, through an interpreter. “I pray to God to not let the efforts of these people be wasted. I want him to be as healthy, and beautiful and cute as he was before.”

Yet, Al Amreeki’s medical outcome is still unknown.

“He’s at mile two of what I would characterize as a marathon of treatment; the first two miles were marked by a very steep hill,” said Maj. (Dr.) David Norton, 332nd



Photo by Tech Sgt. Jeffrey Allen

Al Amreeki, a 3-year-old Iraqi burn victim is surrounded by Capt. Michael Riegler (left), a 332nd Expeditionary Medical Operations Squadron nurse; Basem Hadi, an Iraqi interpreter; and his mother, Amil, before a medical evacuation flight recently from the Air Force Theater Hospital at Balad Air Base, Iraq, to the United States.

Expeditionary Medical Group intensive care unit director at the Air Force Theater Hospital, who is deployed from Keesler Medical Center at Keesler Air Force Base, Miss.

Over the past weeks at the Air Force Theater Hospital, Al Amreeki has undergone multiple skin grafts to his face, neck, chest and arms. The hospital technicians have been diligent in sloughing off the dead tissue that was burned in the fire

when his nylon clothes melted onto his skin and have aggressively treated his four bouts of sepsis, which caused the boy to run 107 degree fevers, with antibiotics.

“He’s kind of our miracle child,” said Capt. Michael Riegler, a 332nd Expeditionary Medical Operations Squadron nurse, who is deployed from Wilford Hall Medical Center at Lackland AFB, Texas. “For as much as he fought, I felt we could try to fight for him.”



McChord hosts chowder cook-off today

McChord's Olympic Dining Facility will host the 3rd annual Northwest Military Clam Chowder Cook-off today from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Ten military teams representing the different services from all over the Northwest will participate in the contest, including a pair of two-person teams from McChord. The judging starts at 11 a.m. and those in attendance can enjoy a free lunch of chowder, salad and French bread after the contest.

New Housing Office hours

The McChord Housing Office has recently revised its hours of operation. Walk-in hours are now 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Appointment hours are 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday. For community housing assistance, call 982-5517, and for military housing assistance, call 982-5516.

62nd MXG Change of Command ceremony

The 62nd Maintenance Group Change of Command ceremony is 10:30 a.m. April 2 in Hanger 4. Col. James Weber will be handing over command to Col. Tracy Smiedendorf.

Parent University seminar

The annual Parent University seminar is April 5 at the McChord Clubs and Community Center. The free one-day seminar offers opportunities for all participants to enhance their parenting skills and features workshops, an information fair, door prizes and free child care. For more information or to register, contact Eva Taylor at 982-9043 or 982-9038.

4th AS Change of Command ceremony

The 4th Airlift Squadron Change of Command ceremony is 2:44 p.m. April 10 in Hanger 4. Lt. Col. R. Wyn Elder will be handing over command to Lt. Col. James R. Ray.

Retiree Dining Out

The annual Retiree Dining Out is 6 p.m. April

18 at the McChord Clubs and Community Center. The menu features prime rib for \$22.95 or salmon at \$20.95, including gratuity. This invitation is extended to all retirees, their families and friends. The event is a great way to spend an evening at reasonable expense. Business dress and tie are required for men but everyone is encouraged to wear their mess dress uniform if possible. The guest speaker for the event is Col. Ronald Pace, Madigan Army Medical Center deputy commander of clinical services. For more information about the event, contact the Retirees Activities Office at 982-3214 or visit the Web site at www.mcchordrao.com.

Rape Aggression Defense course

A free RAD course will be taught here throughout the month of April. The classes are from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. each Thursday of the month and the course is open to women ages 16 and older. Participants learn risk reduction tips and physical defense strategies taught by certified instructors in this national and internationally accredited course. Prior self defense experience is not required. Call 982-0457 for registration.

Air Force Aid Society

Concerned about the soaring cost of higher education for your children? Maybe the Air Force Aid Society can help. The Society's General Henry Arnold Education Grant Program awards \$2,000 grants to sons and daughters of active duty, Title 10 AGR/Reservists on extended active duty, Title 32 AGR performing full-time active duty, retired, retired Reservists with 20 plus qualifying years of service and deceased Air Force members. Also eligible are spouses (residing stateside) of active duty and Title 10 AGR/Reservists on extended active duty and surviving spouses of deceased members. Last year, 75 percent of the McChord certified entries received the \$2,000 award. Call your AFAS section at the Airman & Family Readiness Center at 982-2695 for more information and an application, or visit the Air Force Aid Society's web site at www.afas.org.

Lost and found

The 62nd Security Forces Squadron is currently in possession of numerous items of personal property such as bicycles, keys, etc. These items were found on or near McChord and may be reclaimed by contacting the Security Forces Investigation Section, located in Bldg. 160. For more information, contact the Investigations Section at 982-5936.



Faith and Worship Programs

For more information,
call the chapel support center at 982-5556.

The following chapel program takes place at the base chapel support center, Bldg. 746, unless otherwise noted:

Adult Bible study is from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Wednesdays.

Schedule of worship services

Catholic Services:

All Catholic services are in chapel two.

Saturday: 4 p.m. Confession

5 p.m. Mass

Sunday: 9:30 a.m. Mass

11 a.m. Mass

Protestant Services:

Sunday: 8:30 a.m. Liturgical worship: Chapel one

9:45 a.m. Sunday school for all ages at the

chapel support center

11 a.m. Traditional worship: Chapel one

11 a.m. Contemporary service: Chapel support

center

Jewish Services:

Friday: 6 p.m. Fort Lewis chapel every 1st, 3rd and 5th at the

corner of 12th Street and Liggett Avenue 967-6590

Orthodox Activities:

Sunday: 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy, St. Nicholas Church,

15th Street and Yakima Avenue, Tacoma

Other services:

Orthodox Christian Community, Cascade Chapel, Fort Lewis

Sundays: 8:45 a.m. Pre-Communion prayers

9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy

Confession is by appointment only. Call Father John Anderson at 967-1717 or 906-6843 or e-mail father.anderson@us.army.mil.

